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DIRECTORATE OF
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South Vietnam: Enemy-initiated combat activity dropped to an extremely low level on 7 August, as Communist forces for the most part continued to evade allied operations.

A number of light contacts were reported in the I and III corps areas, but casualties were light. Meanwhile, Communist forces appear to be going forward with plans for attacks, particularly along the southern coast of I Corps and in the III Corps area. There are indications, however, that the enemy is having a difficult time getting into an offensive posture in some areas, due mainly to allied spoiling operations.

Prisoners taken in several sectors have described problems involving shortages of ammunition and other equipment as well as heavy casualties incurred from frequent B-52 and other aircraft attacks on enemy concentrations.

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Czechoslovakia-USSR: Political life is returning to normal in Czechoslovakia.

A controversy is growing in Prague over the abolition just before the Cierna talks of the party post of Lt. Gen. Vaclav Prchlik. Reportedly against the wishes of the party leadership, three local party organizations in Prague have proposed him as a candidate for alternate central committee membership.

This is a clear challenge to Dubcek's leadership. How it is met will not only have a bearing on the future of the Czechoslovak liberals but probably will influence the Soviet reaction. Prchlik had offended Moscow because of his remarks about the way the Warsaw Pact was being run. In the past few days Defense Minister Dzur appeared to be defending him. Dzur may now find himself under attack from Moscow, as well as from the Prague leadership, which does not wish to offend the Soviets needlessly.

The determination of the Dubcek leadership is also being tested by recalcitrant liberal intellectuals who helped push Novotny out of office. Only 24 hours after the party presidium said it expected restraint on the part of the press, the leading Prague literary weekly, Literarni Listy, came out with an attack on Moscow's recent psychological warfare against Czechoslovak leaders.

To make matters worse, the article predicted that liberals in the USSR and Poland would eventually respond to democratization in Czechoslovakia, even though the Czechs would not promote it. This is almost certain to raise hackles in Moscow and Warsaw and, if repeated on any scale in Czechoslovakia, could lead to new problems for the Dubcek regime in relations with its erstwhile allies. [REDACTED]

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Rumania: Rumania's pique over its exclusion from the meeting at Bratislava probably foreshadows increased tension between Bucharest and Moscow.

The Rumanians may be embarking on a new tactic to undermine the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact. They apparently consider that decisions taken by the Pact in their absence are not binding on them. They also reserve the right to refuse to participate in meetings to which they are invited. An editorial published on 7 August appears to suggest this new tactic by noting that the Rumanians intend to be "faithful to their alliances," presumably their bilateral ones, "whether or not the Warsaw Pact exists."

Bucharest has been excluded from the last four summit gatherings of Soviet allies held since last March. The editorial implied that the Rumanians are pleased that the Czechoslovak crisis has eased but argued that the exclusion of Rumania from the high-level decision-making process is "utterly incompatible with the norms" of interparty relations and the "principles of equality between parties and countries." This point was reinforced by quoting the words of Rumanian party and state chief Ceausescu, who has said that discussions of problems "pertaining to international bodies in whose founding Rumania participated cannot be carried out by only some countries."

Following the Rumanians' critical editorial, the Czechoslovak press and Chairman Smrkovsky of the Czechoslovak parliament seem bent on assuring Bucharest and Belgrade that there will be no more such rump meetings. Smrkovsky told a Yugoslav correspondent on 7 August that the Czechoslovak Communist Party will insist that "those empty places around the table of the socialist countries should be filled." Smrkovsky's remarks and the conclusion of a new Rumanian-Czechoslovak treaty of friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance, expected to be signed during Ceausescu's visit to Prague in mid-August, may further aggravate an already delicate situation.

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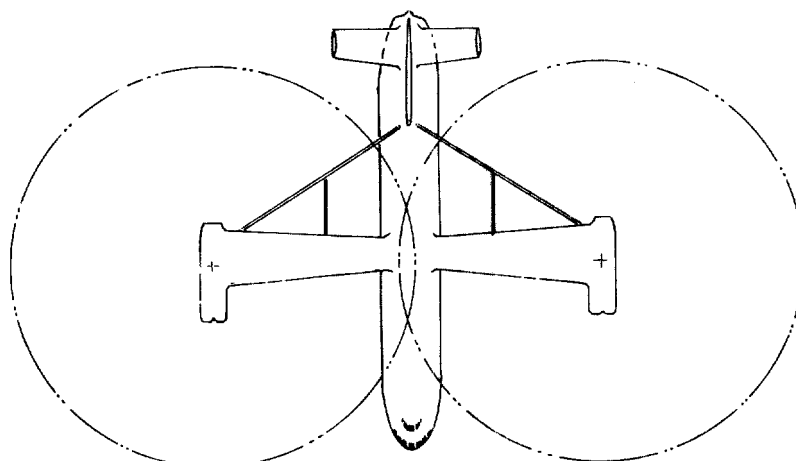
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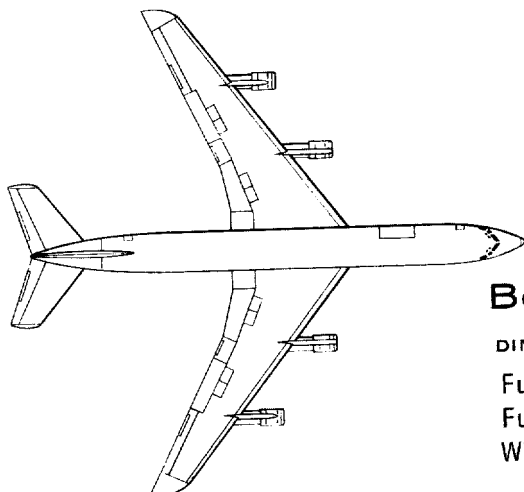
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New Soviet Helicopter-Like Transport



DIMENSIONS (Approx)

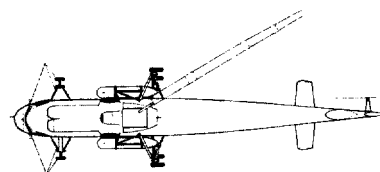
Fuselage length - 125 ft.
Fuselage diameter - 18 ft.
Rotor radius - 57 ft.
Wing span - 108 ft.



MI-10

DIMENSIONS

Fuselage length - 108 ft.
Fuselage diameter - 10 ft.
Rotor radius - 57 ft.



Boeing 707

DIMENSIONS

Fuselage length - 139 ft.
Fuselage diameter - 12 ft.
Wing span - 131 ft.

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USSR: The Soviets are developing a large helicopter-like transport aircraft that could significantly improve their military and civil airlift capability in the 1970s.

The craft [redacted] is twice as big as the Soviet MI-10, currently the world's largest helicopter.

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Preliminary analysis indicates that the new transport can carry about 200 troops or from 25 to 40 tons of cargo up to 200 miles. It has a large fuselage and rear-loading doors to accommodate bulky loads including tanks or assault guns. It can operate from small unimproved fields inaccessible to all but the smallest fixed-wing planes.

The craft also will have important civil uses in the interior of the USSR where the road network is poor. Its designer, Mikhail Mil, has stated that helicopters larger than his MI-10 are needed for Soviet industry in Siberia. [redacted] (Photo/Drawings)

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Malaysia-Philippines: Malaysia and the Philippines have informally agreed to an indefinite cooling-off period in the Sabah dispute.

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during the conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Razak suggested this procedure. Philippine Foreign Secretary Ramos agreed, stating he would recommend it to President Marcos.

Although subsequent contradictory press statements by the two ministers initially appeared likely to undo the agreement, still later press remarks re-emphasized the cooling-off period and called for a resumption of talks "at a propitious time." The incident illustrates both the inability of the two governments to depart from their set positions and the fragility of any arrangement on the Sabah issue.

It remains to be seen whether domestic politics in Malaysia and the Philippines, particularly the latter, can support this period of quiescence agreed on by the ministers. [redacted]

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Japan-Ryukyus: The Buddhist-based Komeito party in Japan is considering abandoning its present neutral stance toward the November election for chief executive in Okinawa and throwing its support to the candidate of the leftist opposition coalition.

Friction over the issue reportedly is developing between Komeito, a rapidly growing party representing the political interests of the Japanese Soka Gakkai Buddhist lay organization, and its Okinawa affiliate, the Komeikai. The Komeikai, at least for the present, wants to continue a policy of "strict neutrality."

Komeikai's refusal to join other opposition parties in support of the leftist candidate may be crucial to Junji Nishime, the candidate of the ruling Okinawa Liberal Democratic Party, who now is given only an even chance of winning.

Komeikai's director, who exercises strong personal control over the organization's members, finds the leftist candidate unappealing and favors Nishime. Komeikai reportedly gave Nishime considerable support in his successful bid in 1965 for the Naha mayoralty, the post he now holds. The Komeikai, many of whose supporters are employed at US bases on Okinawa, has tended to be fairly moderate on issues involving US interests.

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NOTES

North Korea - Mexico: Pyongyang is apparently attempting to establish a presence in Mexico, using the occasion of the forthcoming Olympic Games. The press officer of the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City, acting on Pyongyang's behalf, reportedly requested permission last month for the accreditation of a North Korean press representative for the games this October. He then attempted to sound out the Mexican official on the possibility of the North Korean remaining "for a while" after the Olympics. Although press accreditation may be granted, the Mexicans, who have diplomatic relations with Seoul, are unlikely to permit the North Korean presence to become permanent. [REDACTED]

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Ecuador: President-elect Velasco has backed off from his threat not to assume office on 1 September. He now says that if the new congress that convenes on 10 August modifies the civil service law to his satisfaction he will find it possible to take power with the dignity the presidency demands. Velasco followers in Congress believe their discussions on a working agreement with Liberal and independent congressmen will lead to an acceptable amendment. [REDACTED]

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